



## **Mississippi Office of Homeland Security Provides Grants Allowing Bomb Squads to Purchase Segways**

*First responders in four cities will receive the versatile transportation vehicles*

**Jackson, Miss. (March 8, 2012)** – The Mississippi Office of Homeland Security (OHS) has announced that it will award more than \$37,600 in grants to bomb squads from four municipalities to purchase a Segway Personal Transporter.

The four police departments - Biloxi, Tupelo, Clinton and Jackson – have placed their orders for the unique and versatile transportation devices. Each department will receive a specially outfitted Segway valued at \$9,417. Delivery is expected sometime this month.

The grants are part of a federal program being administered by the United States Department of Homeland Security. The program is intended to improve emergency management and preparedness capabilities at the state, local, and community levels as part of a comprehensive national emergency management system.

The Segway is an electrically powered vehicle, similar to that of an upright scooter. Many law enforcement agencies have purchased Segways to enable their officers to cover larger territories that they could not cover on foot and provide accessibility that mass transportation cannot.

“The primary benefit of the Segway is that it allows the bomb technician examining a potentially explosive device to get in and out quickly”, said J.W. Ledbetter, Executive Director of the OHS. “We are talking about potential life and death situations.”

“This is especially important since they are wearing heavy, cumbersome protection equipment and clothing that makes walking slow and strenuous. The Segway will enable easy access and hopefully prevent loss of lives and injuries,” Ledbetter added.

Last year in Mississippi, there were more than 60 Bomb Team deployments.

Once the Segways arrive at OHS, the four bomb squads will send representatives to Jackson to train on the units.

The Mississippi Office of Homeland Security, a division of the Mississippi Department of Public Safety, seeks to reduce the state’s vulnerability to terrorism and or any disaster that may occur,

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minimize the damage, and recover from events that do occur.

For more information go to [www.homelandsecurity.ms.gov](http://www.homelandsecurity.ms.gov)

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